

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An IC contact unit, comprising:

an actuator including a movable plunger;

a depressing member pivotably movable in relation to said plunger;

a movable support including an IC contact point and a pawl member, said movable support being movable by said depressing member and said pawl member being movable by said depressing member between a first position in which it projects to a card transfer line and a second position in which it retreats upward from said card transfer line, wherein when said pawl member is in said first position and IC card is moved in a card transfer direction, an IC card is prohibited from being transferred to the end of said card transfer line; and

wherein the force of [[an]] said IC card moved into contact with said pawl member moves said movable support such that said IC contact point contacts with the IC card.

2. (Original) The IC contact unit of claim 1, comprising a unit main body on which said movable support is mounted.

3. (Original) The IC contact unit of claim 2, wherein said unit main body comprises a guide portion, and said movable support comprises a guide member, said guide portion and said guide member guiding the movement of said movable support.

4. (Original) The IC contact unit of claim 3, wherein said guide portion comprises a pair of front guide holes and a pair of back guide holes.

5. (Original) The IC contact unit of claim 4, wherein said front guide holes comprise a horizontal portion, a slant portion, and a vertical portion.

6. (Original) The IC contact unit of claim 4, wherein said back guide holes comprise a horizontal portion and a slant portion.

7. (Original) The IC contact unit of claim 4, wherein said guide member comprises a pair of shafts, one said shaft movably inserted in said front guide holes and the other said shaft movably inserted in said back guide holes.

8. (Original) The IC contact unit of claim 3, comprising urging means which exerts a bias in a direction away from the card transfer line on said movable support.

9. (Original) The IC contact unit of claim 8, wherein said urging means comprises a spring attached to said unit main body and said guide member.

10. (Original) The IC contact unit of claim 1, wherein said plunger comprises a transversely directed pin about which said depressing member is pivotably movable.

11. (Original) The IC contact unit of claim 1, wherein said depressing member comprises a vertical portion and a horizontal portion.

12. (Currently Amended) An IC card reader, comprising:

 a card reader main body;
 a plurality of transfer rollers disposed about a card transfer line formed in said card reader main body; and

 an IC contact unit disposed between said transfer rollers and a press roller, comprising:

 an actuator including a movable plunger;
 a depressing member pivotably movable in relation to said plunger;
 a movable support including an IC contact point and a pawl member, said movable support being movable in a direction of the card transfer line by said depressing member and said pawl member being movable by said depressing member between a first position in which it projects to a card transfer line and a second position in which it retreats upward from said card transfer line; and

 wherein the force of an IC card moved by said transfer rollers into contact with said pawl member moves said movable support such that said IC contact point contacts with the IC card.

13. (Original) The IC card reader of claim 12, comprising a unit main body on which said movable support is mounted, wherein said unit main body comprises a guide portion, and said movable support comprises a guide member, said guide portion and said guide member guiding the movement of said movable support.

14. (Original) The IC card reader of claim 13, wherein said guide portion comprises a pair of front guide holes and a pair of back guide holes and said guide member comprises a pair of shafts, one said shaft movably inserted in said front guide holes and the other said shaft movably inserted in said back guide holes.

15. (Original) The IC card reader of claim 14, wherein said front guide holes comprise a horizontal portion, a slant portion, and a vertical portion and said back guide holes comprise a horizontal portion and a slant portion.

16. (Original) The IC card reader of claim 13, comprising urging means which exerts a bias in a direction away from the card transfer line on said movable support, wherein said urging means comprises a spring attached to said unit main body and said guide member.

17. (Original) The IC card reader of claim 12, wherein said plunger comprises a transversely directed pin about which said depressing member is pivotably movable.

18. (Currently Amended) A method for reading information on an IC card, comprising the steps of:

moving the IC card along a card transfer line;
contacting the IC card with a pawl member of a movable support, wherein said pawl member prevents movement of said IC card in a card transfer direction;
utilizing the force from the movement of the IC card to move the movable

support between a position in which the pawl member is above the card transfer line to a position in which the pawl member projects to the card transfer line and an IC contact point located on a lower surface of the movable support contacts with the IC card; and reading information on the IC card.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein said moving step comprises translating rotational movement of a plurality of transfer rollers to the IC card along the card transfer line.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19, further comprising guiding the movement of the movable support.

21. (New) An IC contact unit, comprising:
an actuator including a movable plunger;
a depressing member pivotably movable in relation to said plunger;
a movable support including an IC contact point and a pawl member, said movable support being movable by said depressing member and said pawl member being movable by said depressing member between a first position in which it projects to a card transfer line and a second position in which it retreats upward from said card transfer line, allowing said IC card to be transferred across said IC contact point to the end of said card transfer line; and

wherein the force of an IC card moved into contact with said pawl member moves said movable support such that said IC contact point contacts with the IC card.

22. (New) A method for reading information on an IC card, comprising the steps of:

moving a pawl member downward across a card transfer line;

moving the IC card along said card transfer line;

contacting the IC card with a pawl member of a movable support;

utilizing the force from the movement of the IC card to move the movable support between a position in which the pawl member is above the card transfer line to a position in which the pawl member projects to the card transfer line and an IC contact point located on a lower surface of the movable support contacts with the IC card;

reading information on the IC card;

moving said pawl member upward away from said card transfer line; and

transferring said IC card member across said contact point to the end of said card transfer line or transferring said IC card away from said contact point toward an exit/inlet portion.